

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BUCAR 06557 071344Z
ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /018 W
-----128219 071828Z /47 40

R 071119Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5280

S E C R E T BUCHAREST 6557

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: ASEC
SUBJECT: FIRE HAZARD SURVEY (U)

1. (S) THE FOLLOWING WAS TRANSMITTED FROM DAO THIS EMBASSY
TO DIA ON 6 SEP 77 AND IS PROVIDED FOR DEPARTMENT'S INFORMATION
AND ANY COMMENTS:

" IN THE WAKE OF US EMBASSY MOSCOW FIRE DISASTER, I
HAVE MADE A SURVEY OF DAO AND HAVE UNCOVERED TWO EXTREMELY
HAZARDOUS AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATIONS. FIRST, THERE
ARE TWENTY (20) BAGS OF TWENTY (20 POUNDS EACH SODIUM
NITRATE PLUS FOUR (4) IGNITER CHARGES AND FOUR (4)
IGNITER GRENADES -- ENOUGH SODIUM NITRATE TO BLOW UP
AND BURN THIS END OF BUCHAREST, THE PRODUCT WAS
PACKAGED IN 1952 AND HAS BEEN STASHED ON AN UPPER
SHELF OF OUR PHOTO LAB WHERE TEMPERATURES OFTEN GET
VERY INTENSE. I DISCUSSED THIS HAZARD OF MAINTAINING
THE SODIUM NITRATE WITH OUR RESIDENT SEA BEE WHO
SURVEYED THE SITUATION AND DEEMED IT "CRITICALLY
DANGEROUS". I PROPOSE TO GET RID OF THIS STUFF
LOCALLY BY TURNING IT OVER TO THE ROMANIAN ARMY ENGINEERS
FOR DESTRUCTION. EXPLANATION WILL BE THAT THIS MATERIAL
WAS DISCOVERED IN THE EMBASSY WHERE IT APPARENTLY HAS
BEEN STASHED AWAY SINCE 1952; THAT OUR AMBASSADOR
CONSIDERS IT A DISTINCT FIRE HAZARD AND DOES NOT WANT
IT ON THE PREMISES. HOPEFULLY THIS WILL SUFFICE AS I'M
SURE THE ROMANIANS ARE ASTUTE ENOUGH TO KNOW THE PURPOSE

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OF SODIUM NITRATE IS FOR EMERGENCY DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION
AND WILL NOT PRESS THE ISSUE OF "WHY" WE HAVE THE STUFF.
HOWEVER, IF THEY DO, OUR OFFICIAL RESPONSE WILL BE THAT IT
PROBABLY WAS IMPORTED IN 1952 FOR DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION
PURPOSES DUE TO THE UNSTABLE WORLD CONDITIONS AND OVER
THE YEARS WAS FORGOTTEN AND OVERLOOKED. IF WE TRY TO
EXPORT THE MATERIAL TO THE WEST FOR DESTRUCTION, WE MIGHT

BE TAKING TOO GREAT A RISK DUE TO AGE DETERIORATION AND
CONSEQUENT INSTABILITY OF THE NITRATES.

2. (S) AS REPLACEMENT FOR THE SODIUM NITRATE, REQUEST
WE BE FURNISHED TEN (10) THERMAL GRENADES WHICH
SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR EMERGENCY DESTRUCTION
REQUIREMENTS.

3. (S) SECOND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATION IS
CONFIGURATION OF DAO OFFICES VIS-A-VIS FIRE HAZARD.
YOU CAN VERIFY THE SITUATION WITH MITCHELL; HOWEVER,
THERE IS ONLY ONLY INGRESS/EGRESS ROUTE. AN EMBASSY
FIRE WOULD BLOCK THIS EXIT ROUTE LEAVING DAO
PERSONNEL TRAPPED SINCE ALL WINDOWS ARE HEAVILY BARRED.
I HAVE DISCUSSED THIS PERIL WITH OUR RESIDENT SEA BEE
WHO RECOMMENDS WE PROCURE A SHAPED CHARGE EXPLOSIVE AND
DETONATOR THAT WOULD PROVIDE US WITH IMMEDIATE EXIT
THROUGH A WINDOW AREA. ALTERNATIVE IS TO CONSTRUCT SOME
TYPE OF EXIT DOOR WHICH WOULD BE EXPENSIVE AND DECREASE
SECURITY OF DAO OFFICES. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR IMMEDIATE
COMMENTS ON THESE MATTERS. THIS MESSAGE COORDINATED WITH
POST SECURITY OFFICER WHO CONCURS. AMBASSADOR BARNES HAS BEEN
ADVISED AND DUPLICATE COPY THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED TO
STATE DEPARTMENT."
BARNES

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 07-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
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